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ANNEXATION JUSTIFIED IN THE INTERESTS OF PEACE AND
AN HONORABLE DISCHARGE OF DUTY.

REMARKS

OF

HON. J. H. WALKER,
OF MASSACHUSETTS,

IN THE

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,

SATURDAY, JUNE 11, 1898.



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HON. J. H. WALKER.

The House having under consideration the joint resolution (H. Res. 259) to provide for annexing the Hawaiian Islands to the United States—

Mr. WALKER of Massachusetts said:

MR. SPEAKER: I hope I shall be able to relieve the House from any effects which may have been produced by the lamentations of its Jeremiah. [Laughter.] In the discussion and decision of this question there is not the first element or purpose of territorial expansion. We enter upon the discussion and decision of this question of accepting Hawaii in precisely the same manner and upon the same principles that we would enter upon the discussion of the question of building a ship of our Navy. It is within as narrow limits as that question. It is clearly a question of our national defense, our national duty, our national existence, in the position in which the great Former of the destiny of nations has placed us.

I have struggled against this decision. I have been opposed to the annexation of Hawaii until I heard the shot of the guns of Dewey at Manila; and then I wakened to the importance of this question to the great destiny, as I believe, of this nation. No man has a moral right, in his power and strength in any community, to shut himself up within his own selfish interest and advantage and there live, seeking what he may for himself and forgetting those about him. He has not this right either in a State or in a nation, nor has any nation such a right. It has no right to cut itself off from all the moral obligations that rest upon it to secure righteousness and maintain peace in the great community of nations.

Are there any obligations resting upon that great empire of Great Britain to secure justice? Do we look upon her to discharge any of the duties that become her in her place of power among the nations? And are we to be absolved from every obligation that rests upon England? Was that the idea of our fathers? Have we received nothing in blessing from Almighty God? Shall we return nothing to our fellow-nations in interest in them as our fellows? I do not make any claim that it is our duty to right the wrongs of every people and of every nation under all circumstances, but I do say that it is the duty of this nation to take its proper place among the nations of the world, and that we stand verily guilty before God if we do not do our full duty, maintaining peace in the world. We are seeking Hawaii for peace.

The roots of all moral courage rest in physical courage. The power of moral courage, in the last analysis, rests in the physical courage of the man or the nation, and the certainty that moral courage will find exercise in physical courage and in action when duty calls. In order that we may have practical courage, physical courage, and moral courage we must have the means of legitimately exercising our physical power, else we are as weak as China when attacked by Japan. Where was this nation in practical physical power when Chile threatened us but a short time since? If Chile had pursued her purpose to the end she would have won as against us for a time. Where should we have been in this contest with the weak power of Spain ten years ago? Spain would have won if the contest had been then commenced.

Mr. Speaker, I have become convinced that this nation, to maintain her self-respect and the respect of the nations and in the interest of peace, must have a navy as powerful as any nation in the world—ship for ship, man for man, fort for fort. [Applause.] We must have Hawaii as a part of our naval outfit. We must have the Nicaragua Canal as a part of our naval as well as mercantile outfit. [Applause.] Those are three things that this nation owes to itself and owes it to every other nation of the world to have. It is a duty that we can not shirk. Any man who belittles his own power and shirks his own duty, shrinks and shrivels and does injury to his town as long as he exists on this earth. Every nation that forgets its high place, every nation that fails to do its

duty, must shrink and shrivel in the life of each one of its citizens all the days of its existence.

I was struck, as I never have been struck before by any event in our history, even more than when the guns were fired on Fort Sumter, by the electrical effect upon this nation when we heard the guns of Dewey at Manila. [Applause.] This nation towers to a height more than double what she ever had attained before. And I say here that we must come up to our opportunities, that we must be in the possession of the physical power to make our moral decisions effective, or we must see civilization hindered if not retrograded.

What are the other nations of the earth doing? Where is the nation standing for liberty among the nations, with the power and disposition to enforce it, except England? I ask here and now, are we to enter into alliance with England? No! Are we to have an alliance with England? Yes. What kind of an alliance? None whatever in form, but an alliance of good fellowship, of duty done, seeing our duty eye to eye for humanity. I believe that this Government, uniting with Japan and Great Britain, should enter into a treaty to-morrow, if possible, that the ports of all three nations, under all circumstances, should be open to each one and all of the three nations. How long? Not a day beyond the time when either nation shall give notice that the agreement is terminated.

The most lasting alliance that can be made, and the only one that can be lasting, is an alliance which will last during the free consent of the parties to it. The moment you make an alliance for all time each party begins to think when and where and how it shall be terminated; but when you make an alliance that can be terminated at any moment, each party is studying to maintain and perpetuate it. What shall we add to that? Following the example of the three American commissioners, who alone settled the trouble of our southern neighbor Venezuela, we will agree that when any difficulty arises between any two of the three nations that the two nations that are at a misunderstanding shall each appoint—what? A court of arbitration? No; for a court of arbitration will breed war. What then? The countries at odds

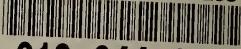
shall each appoint three commissioners of its own citizens, and that for two years they will take no further action.

Then each commissioner of each country is in duty bound and under bonds to find grounds of agreement, not of disassent. But if you have a court of arbitration, the commissioners of each nation become counsel for their respective nation, and are studying for grounds of disagreement, and not of agreement. This is all the alliance we want with any nation. The time has come, and in the interest of peace, when this country must and will have the power of enforcing the just and righteous decision of a righteous people. The righteous are in the majority always in this country. They always have been in every exigency in the past, and will be in the future; and not only in this country, but in every other nation that speaks the language of the Anglo-Saxon race.

Now, what will become of our friend Russia, that has always stood by us? Because of our power and because of our friendship to the mother country we will see that neither she nor any other country does injustice to our friend Russia, or any other nation that is friendly or even unfriendly to us. The time of our swaddling clothes has gone. The pitcher is broken at the well, and never can be restored. We can not shut our eyes to the fact that we have attained to-day, as I said before, to a stature such as none of us dreamed we should ever reach in our day or even in that of our immediate children. We can not shirk its responsibilities. We can not return again to the place of a physical pygmy or a moral dwarf. [Applause.]



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